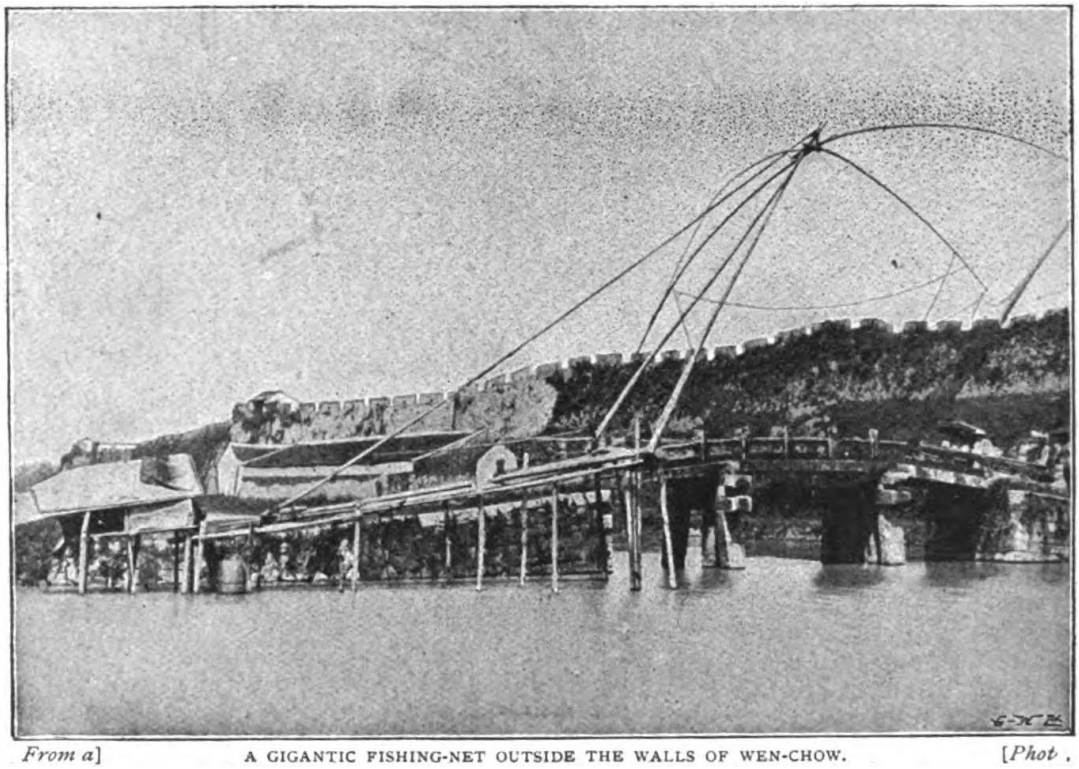
that the women mend the nets and prepare the fish for market. This beautiful photograph conveys a capital notion of the *dolce far niente* existence of the "toilers of the deep." But perhaps this is a misnomer, for no inhabitant of the glorious islands of the Southern Seas was ever known to toil. At any rate, in the photograph we are considering, we see a lovely prospect of sea and tropical foliage with a typical Tahitian fisher-hut on the silver strand. Would that it were possible to paint an adequate word-picture of a great fishing expedition by torchlight in Tahiti! As I have before hinted, the innumerable cocoa-nut palm torches flaring across the water on dark nights make a picture that is not easily forgotten by the spectator. Indeed, the scene can only be compared to the thousand lights of a great railway station at home, or the illuminated promenade of a fashionable watering-place—only, of course, far more beautiful, more poetic, more romantic. The very shrill cries of the excited islanders add to the general weirdness of the effect, whilst the quaint snatches of triumphant song, and the splashing dances of the women—as their own particular men-folk make an extra big haul—actually suggest an open-air ballet! Fishing, by the way, is looked upon by these happy islanders not so much as an imperative necessity to the making of a living as a delightful recreation, and a form of sport in which it is possible for an especially expert spear-man to outshine all his rivals.

The last photograph reproduced shows an immense Chinese fishing net and typical joss outside the walls of Wen-chow city. When fish are to be caught the bamboo poles are gradually lowered until the net is quite beneath the water. It is allowed to remain there from morning until night, when it is again drawn up, with a curious absence of ceremony or excitement, and the miscellaneous catch of fish carefully and methodically removed. The Chinese, who are most superstitious, have the strongest possible objection to drawing up these big fishing nets in the presence of foreigners. Will they, one wonders, ever conquer their hatred and distrust of the European, whose influence is swiftly extending among them? They always maintain that the eye of the "foreign devil" bewitches and even poisons the fish, and brings ill-luck to the hard-working fishermen. Through the round hole in the city wall which is seen from the end, a European narrowly escaped with his life during the fearful riots of 1884, solely because he had innocently looked on while these very nets were dragged up and emptied of their catch of fish.



From a] A GIGANTIC FISHING-NET OUTSIDE THE WALLS OF WEN-CHOW. [*Phot.*

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Above the Clouds by Railway.

By A Sarathkumar Ghosh.

All about the marvellous Darjeeling Railway. With unique and superb photos. You pass into a different climate in a few hours, and finally behold the stupendous range of Mount Everest, the highest peak on this planet.

IMAGINE yourself breakfasting on the burning plains of India at 9 a.m., and then, after passing through various intervening regions, taking tea in London at five on the same day! Imagine, also, that you are *not* carried through the air in some marvellous balloon without catching a glimpse of the earth beneath; on the contrary, suppose that you are travelling along the ground and passing through Afghanistan, Persia, Asia Minor, Turkey, the Tyrol, Switzerland, and France. What a wonderful panorama of changing scenery, climate, vegetation, and people! Nay, more; imagine that, as you are sipping your tea at the end of the journey, you have only to look out of the window to see on the distant horizon one dazzling line of snow-clad peaks piercing the clouds and bathed in all the colours of the rainbow.

That is what practically is done every day by the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, one of the modern wonders of the world, both as regards the stupendous nature of its enterprise and the sublime grandeur of its environments. To the tourist the whole journey from the foot of the hills, where he bids farewell to the hot plains of India, to the summit of Darjeeling, whence he beholds the mighty Himalayas in one magnificent sweep across the horizon, is like a dreamy, ecstatic transformation scene in some magic kaleidoscope. The exquisite beauty of the Taj-Mahal, the loveliest work of man, falls as far short of the sublime grandeur of the "snowy range" of Darjeeling, the most stupendous work of Nature, as a glimmering street lamp is transcended by the Aurora Borealis. But we are anticipating.

The various railway lines of India pour their human burden into Silliguri, the first station of this wonderful Himalayan railway, at about 9 a.m. every day. The ascent begins at 9.30 a.m., the train starting from the very door of the railway hotel. The first impression of the traveller when he sees this train is: "What a tiny toy, this Himalayan railway!" How different from the cumbrous, broad-gauge trains of the Eastern Bengal Railway one had entered in Calcutta the night before, or even the narrow-gauge trains of the North Bengal one has just left behind! Why, it has only a 2ft.-gauge, and each car is no bigger than an ordinary dining-table!

Quite true; but *that little train has to reach an altitude of* 7,500*ft. by* 4 *p.m.!* Nay, it has to creep along narrow ledges cut in the solid rock, with yawning chasms on one side and perpendicular walls on the other; it has to leap from crag to crag like a mountain goat—but we are again anticipating. No wonder, then, the whole train weighs no more than forty tons, and in traversing the fifty miles from Silliguri to Darjeeling has to go up a gradient of 1 in 23 in several parts of the line. Even this is a vast improvement from the 18-ton trains and 1 in 19 gradient of a few years ago.

On leaving the plains, the train races along at a fair speed. Our first photograph shows the train some seven miles from Silliguri. The country is still flat, and the vegetation semi-tropical, *i.e.*, of the latitude of Northern India. But notice that the permanent way in the glade is artificially raised above the surrounding plains. This artificial rise goes on for some time till the train reaches the foot of the first range of hills (they call them "hills" in India if they be anything below 10,000ft. in height). Obviously, it wouldn't do to start climbing all of a sudden. But imagine the labour of raising inch by inch that artificial embankment seven miles long.

On either side stand a vast array of sāl, toon, and other timber trees, garlanded with leafy creepers and blossoming orchids; while gorgeous peacocks, bronze-winged pigeons, mynas, parrots, and other brilliant tropical birds, scared by the snorting engine, arise from the glade and flit across the forest. Formerly, wild elephants, rhinoceri, tigers, leopards, buffaloes, deer, and other denizens of the tropics lurked in the jungle around; but the march of civilization, in the shape of this miniature train, has driven them further back into their wilds. On one occasion, however, not many years ago, the tables were neatly turned—and the train it was that fled. It had just entered this glade when the driver noticed a whole herd of wild elephants right across the permanent way. The big brute of a male, the leader of the herd, planted his forefeet over the track and faced the engine. The driver pulled up sharp, not twenty yards from the herd. There was a devilish twinkle in the leader's eye, and his monstrous ears flapped ominously. The driver instantly reversed the lever, and put on full speed astern till he reached the station from which he had just started. You see, his train was only an 18-tonner!

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Photo. by Johnston &] THROUGH THE FOREST ON LEAVING THE PLAINS. [*Hoffmann, Calcutta.*

Soon after leaving this glade, the actual ascent begins. The line has been laid, just where it was possible to lay it—in a narrow ledge cut out of the solid rock, on the side of a hill with the top cut off like a truncated cone, and so on till an adjacent hill is reached. Then a path is cut on the side of the latter in a line with the former, and the train passes on to the second hill. In this manner, the train ascends from hill to hill. Of course, it has to wind, round and round, several times on a hill, going higher and higher at each turn, before it can meet a suitable junction on the other. Our second photograph shows such a "loop" on a hill, about sixteen miles from Silliguri. The hill is a truncated cone, on the side of which the line curves round several times before finding a suitable level with the next hill. The illustration shows the last two curves. The outer circle begins at the right-hand side of the photo., passes behind the bungalow at the top, comes into sight again on the left of

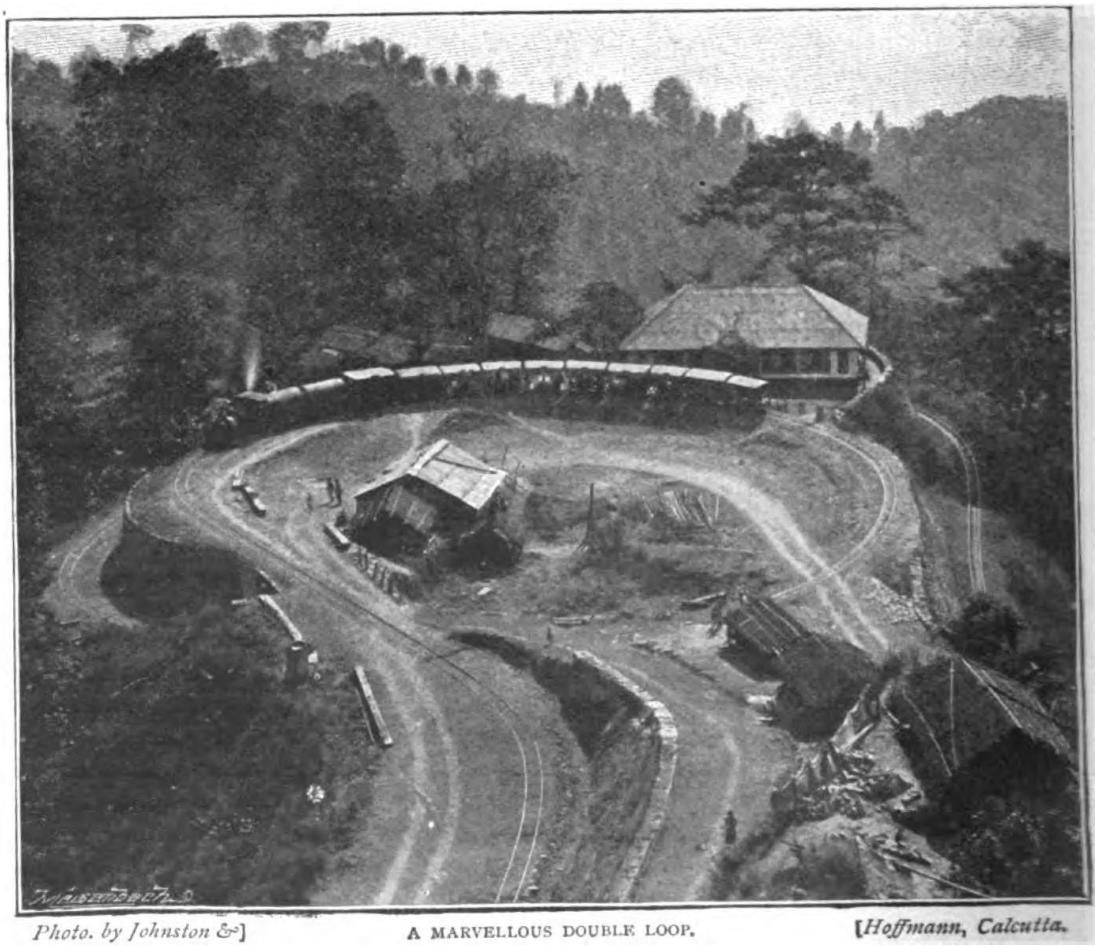

Photo. by Johnston &] A MARVELLOUS DOUBLE LOOP. [*Hoffmann, Calcutta.*

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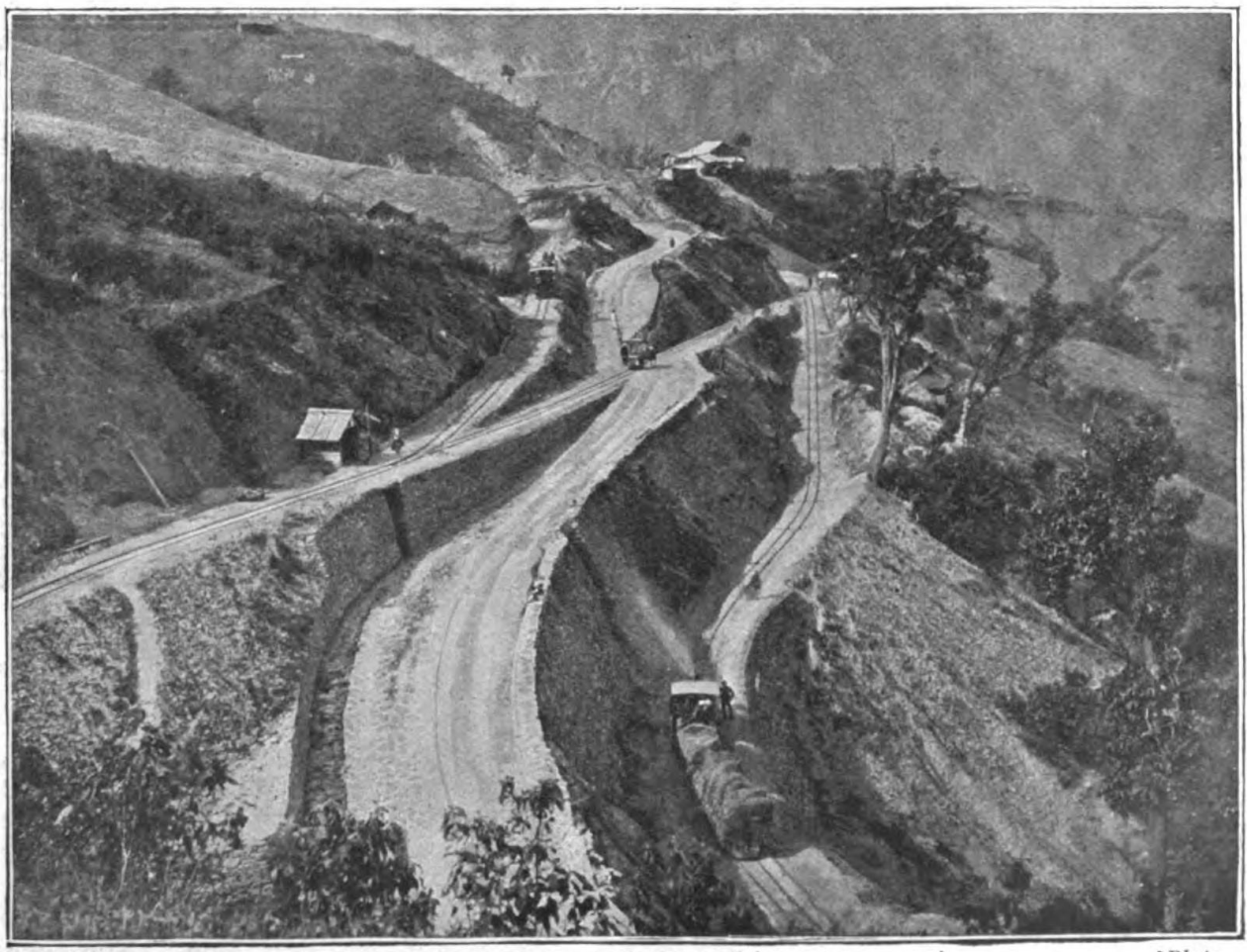
the photo. (just below the engine), plunges beneath the cutting at the left bottom corner, emerges into sight again as the inner circle above, and finally passes along the line (at the bottom of the photo.) to the side of an adjoining hill, the whole thus forming a sort of spiral staircase. The inner circle is a very sharp curve, with a radius of no more than 60ft.! Consequently, the train just creeps at a walking pace along the side of the cone, where there is not even sufficient room for a railing to protect it; if it went any faster, it would probably tumble off the line into the outer circle beneath! A good idea of the miniature size of the train can be gained by comparing the last four cars with the bungalow behind. Their combined length is not even equal to three-quarters of the bungalow!

At one place, named "Agony Point," there is an extraordinary loop of the line, situated at an altitude of about 3,000ft. What an extraordinary amount of work must have been done in constructing this loop! The top of the hill was cut away till a surface of about 59½ft. radius was obtained; then the line was laid at the extreme edge of this surface with no margin to spare. Even as it is, the curve is so sharp that every passenger can see his next-door neighbour. Of course, the speed here is also reduced to a walking pace, both on account of the sharp curve and the steep gradient. The passenger feels the effect of this gradient far more intensely when the train is descending than in the upward journey. The sensation is very queer; it is a combination of what one experiences in going down a switch-back, and the creepy feeling up one's back in the Underground when the brake is gradually applied on nearing a station. In the photo. the train is shown entering the part where the sensation begins. A sharp whistle from the engine announces this fact, *as a warning to the passengers to keep their seats.* A sudden rush to one side of the train might upset the whole concern into the valley beneath, especially as the cars actually hang over the ledge! No wonder the place is named "Agony Point"!

After leaving this place (in the upward journey) there are no more loops to be met with, the method of ascent being by way of "reversing" the train alternately on the side of a hill. The method adopted is this: a number of ledges are cut on the side of the hill, one above another, so that the top of the lowermost is joined to the bottom of the one above it, and the top of this again to the bottom of the next



From a] ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL REVERSING STATIONS (ALTITUDE 3,500FT.). *[Photo.*

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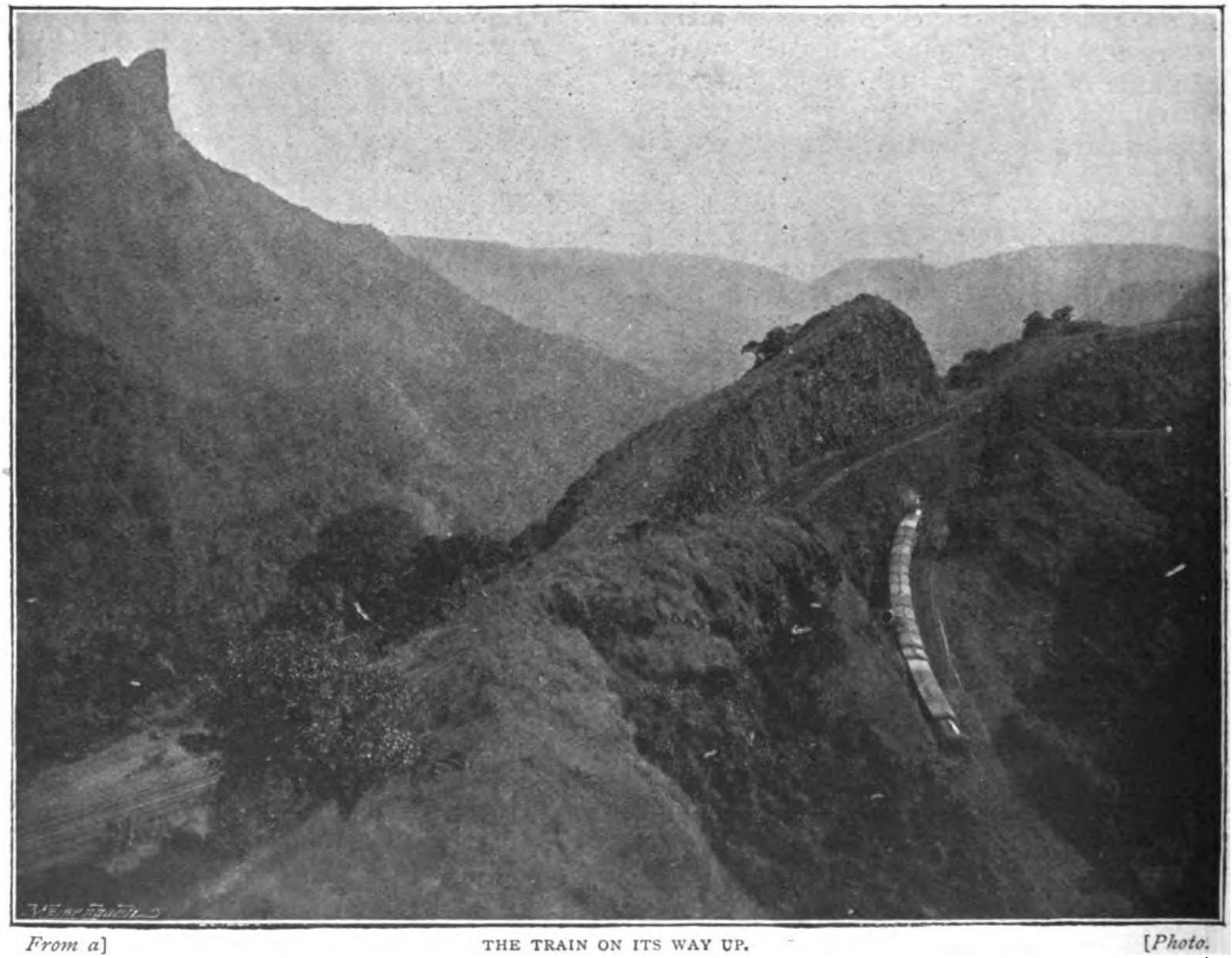
and so on—the whole forming a complete "zig-zag." In the photograph, the train is seen ascending the lowermost ledge (at the foot of the picture); it will join the next ledge near the top of the picture, ascend this ledge towards the left-hand bottom corner, then pass on to the third ledge close to the shed on the left, ascend this ledge right up to another shed, shown at the top, in order to join the fourth ledge, and finally disappear behind the hill at the top left-hand corner of the photo. This "reversing station" is situated at an altitude of about 3,500ft., and some twenty-three miles from Silliguri.

But perhaps a better idea of the extreme difficulty of ascent in this wonderful railway can be obtained from our next photograph. What a



From a] THE TRAIN ON ITS WAY UP. *[Photo.*

terribly narrow ledge it is along which the train is passing! What a weird sensation is experienced by the passenger in going over these narrow ledges and sharp curves; and how giddy must he feel in ascending the high spur at the top of the picture! And withal, what a wild, lonely place it is, with huge rocks, steep valleys, rugged precipices, on every side!

But how on earth, the reader will, no doubt, ask, can the train ascend such steep inclines? Won't it slip down every now and again? Well, it does slip down a little occasionally; but, then, the driver gives a sharp whistle, and extra engines, lurking in ambush behind some mysterious corner, dash out at the distress signal, and push up the train from behind till the critical point is passed. If it comes on to rain and the rails become too slippery, a number of coolies immediately run out from their lair and strew sand on the rails before the train to enable the wheels to have a greater "bite" on the metal.

Thus the train proceeds, overcoming the most stupendous difficulties as it were by sheer pluck and determination. The whole line is single, except in parts where down trains are allowed to pass. It would be practically impossible to lay a double line along the whole way, simply because there is not sufficient room in most of the critical parts.

By about 1 p.m. an altitude of 4,500ft. is attained, and the train draws up alongside an hotel, where nearly an hour is given to the passenger for taking tiffin *and changing his clothes!* For, so far, the sun was pretty hot; consequently, the light clothes of the plains were a sufficient protection. Now, however,

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the train will ascend regions of a temperate climate, and some little extra clothing—even if it be an overcoat—is essential.

Higher and higher the train climbs, amidst the grandest scenery. Alpine meadows mantle the mountain side, oaks, pines, and rhododendrons dot the ground at every step. Down the steep mountains two streams, the Rungeet and the Teesta, rush along swiftly and join together in one broad river. Nor is this all. As soon as we attain an altitude of 5,000ft., white banks of cloud begin to gather on all sides. At one moment the sun is shining brightly above us; then comes a cloud, and we are left in sudden darkness. We ascend a little higher—the cloud envelops us like a delicious cool mist—then passes away, leaving us in bright sunshine. We ascend yet another spur, turn round a corner—there below us is the cloud covering the mountain side like a bundle of fleece. Suddenly, there is a break in the range of mountains—down, down, forty miles away, we catch a glimpse of the plains below like a green cloth with a white chalk-mark meandering all along it—the united stream, the junction of whose tributaries we have just passed. Suddenly, a dark cloud obscures the sun—its huge shadow rushes along the plains with a frightful velocity and sweeps over stream and vale and mountain in one gigantic embrace.

Thus we climb henceforth. Beauty upon beauty, grandeur upon grandeur, succeed one another in an endless panorama. The human mind is lost in an ecstasy of delight, and knows not which way to turn to admire. Primeval forests cover the valleys, orchids, ferns, creepers hang in the gayest festoons on every side, while gorgeous-plumed hill mynas flit across from tree to tree, like so many butterflies. And still we ascend, higher, yet higher. At last an altitude of 7,500ft. is reached—suddenly, as we creep along the edge of a precipice, there bursts forth before our startled gaze the first glimpse of the snow-clad Himalayas. It is a feeling of intense awe that subdues us at that moment, and the lesser joys of the journey are merged in a sublime contemplation. The railway still curls and curls before us for three long miles, while the snows appear, disappear, reappear, till the last curve is reached and the train enters the spur on which stands Darjeeling, the "Queen of the Himalayas."

JUNCTION OF THE RUNGEET AND TEESTA RIVERS—MAGNIFICENT SCENERY AS WITNESSED ABOUT HALF-WAY UP.
Photo. by Johnston & [*Hoffmann, Calcutta.*

Ascending the slope above the railway station, we get a magnificent view of the town beneath our feet and the dazzling line of snows far away on the distant horizon. Our photograph reproduces this view, which is perhaps the most unique of its kind, as it gives at one glance the longest line (150 miles) of snow-clad peaks in the world. On the left of the picture is shown Mount Kunchinjunga (28,500ft.) with several other peaks, all higher than 25,000ft.

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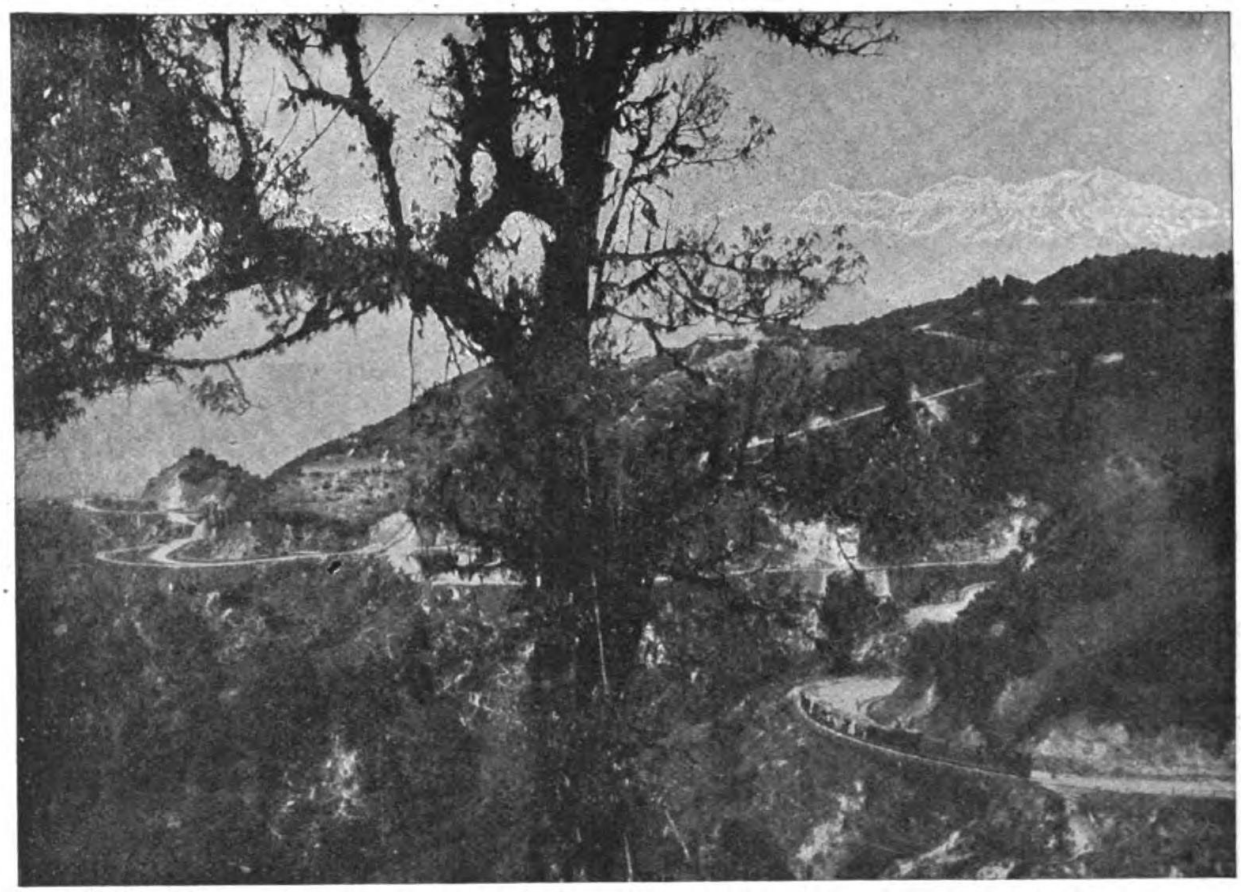
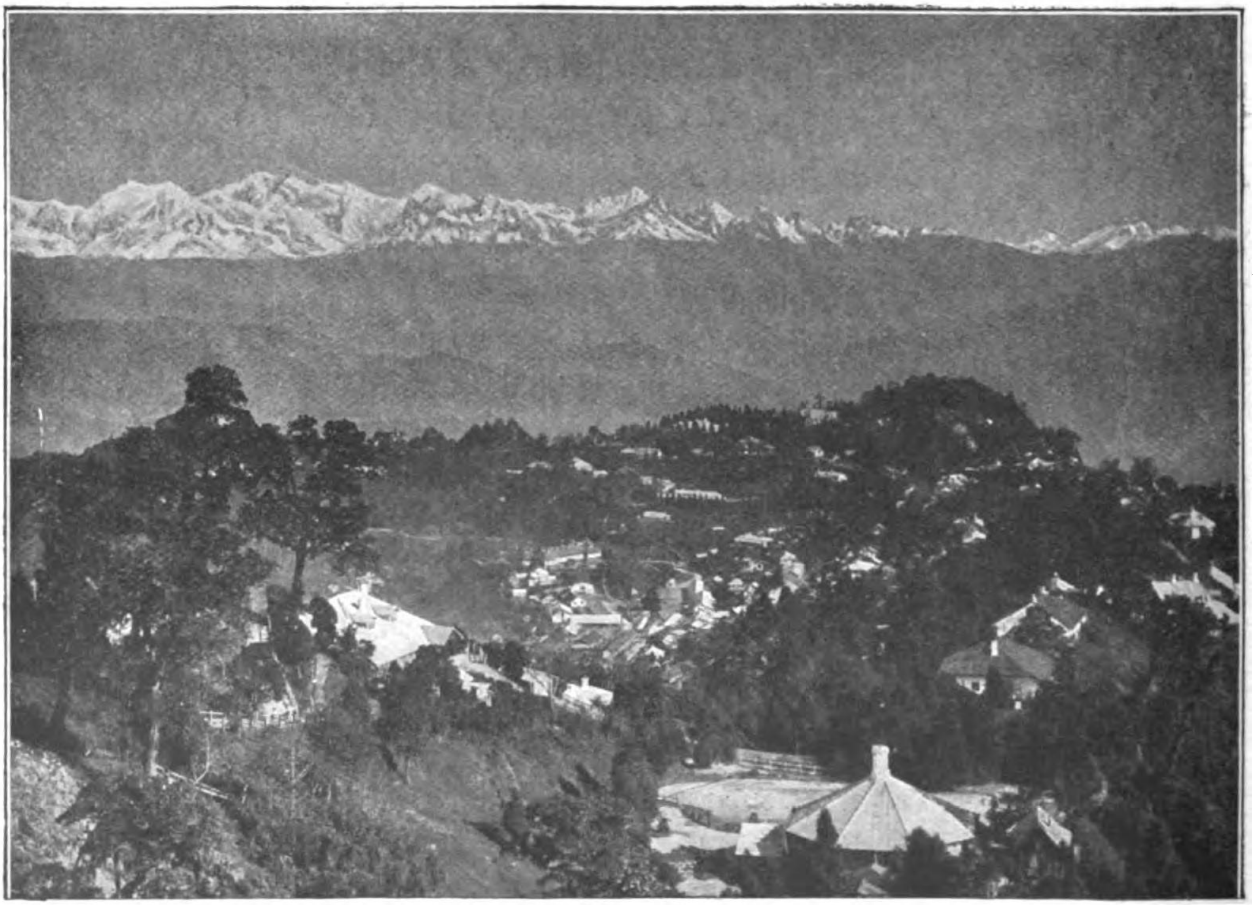


Photo. by Johnston &] FIRST GLIMPSE OF THE HIMALAYAS, AT A HEIGHT OF 7,500FT. [*Hoffmann, Calcutta.*



"THE MOST STUPENDOUS SPECTACLE ON EARTH"—NEARING DARJEELING, AND LOOKING AT THE LONGEST AND GREATEST
Photo. by Johnston &] RANGE OF SNOW PEAKS IN THE WORLD—ALL OVER 25,000FT. [*Hoffmann, Calcutta.*

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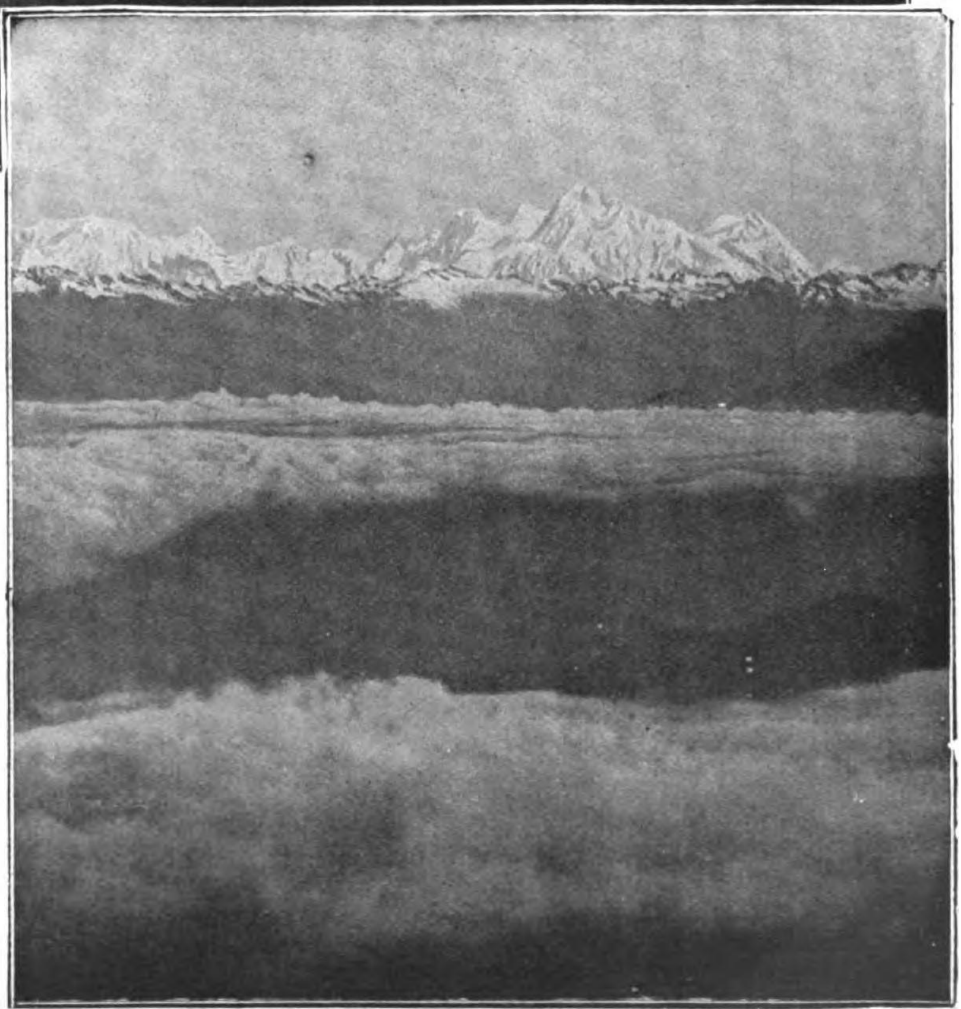
DARJEELING AND THE ETERNAL SNOWS, FROM TIGER HILL.
Photo. by Johnston & Hoffmann, Calcutta.

Sunrise on this line of eternal snow is, perhaps, the most beautiful sight in all Nature. The writer was fortunate enough to occupy a room so conveniently situated that he could view this spectacle without lifting his head from his pillow. It was indeed a dream-land into which he felt himself transported. As the first dawn appeared, there seemed to be a glimmering light hovering like a halo over the snowy peaks; then, as the sun mounted higher and higher, there burst forth a succession of gorgeous colours



UNIQUE PHOTO. OF MOUNT EVEREST, HIGHEST IN THE WORLD (29,002FT.)—TAKEN FROM SANTAKPHU, LOOKING DOWN ON THE CLOUDS.
Photo. by Johnston & Hoffmann, Calcutta.

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around, above, beneath the snows, which glided imperceptibly into one another as in a transformation scene. Then, at last, as the sun arose clear above the horizon, the colours receded into the background, and the snows stood out in one long line of dazzling white.

Our next photograph is perhaps still more impressive. It is taken from the summit of "Tiger Hill" (8,500ft.), which lies at the back of Darjeeling. It shows the town shooting out in a sharp spur over the surrounding valleys, naturally desires to crown his triumphs by ascending a neighbouring hill, called Santakphu, in order to see Mount Everest (29,002ft.), the highest peak in the world. There he sees the mountain, standing amidst a vast solitude, clothed in dazzling white; a cloud overshadows him, and he veils his face in reverent awe because of the glory before him. Then falling, as it were, to the earth again from these wondrous realms of creation, he looks to the valleys beneath to seek relief. Tiny specks of

MARVELLOUS PANORAMA OF GIANT PEAKS, WITH THE TEA GARDENS OF DARJEELING BELOW.
Photo. by John ton & Hoffmann, Calcutta.

and Kunchinjunga towering above them all in stupendous majesty. The dazzling snows above, the fleecy clouds beneath, and the dark spur all along the middle, arouse a weird, awe-stricken feeling in the heart of the beholder which time cannot efface.

Having seen these wonders, the traveller tea-gardens, enveloped in fleecy clouds, dot the dark foreground here and there, one of which can just be seen on the left of the photograph.

A better idea, however, of these tea-gardens can be obtained from our next photograph. They are well worth a visit, as the tourist is

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